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A NOTE ON THE FILM-MAKER

Among the film experimentalists, Stan Brakhage (who is very young) arrives as one whose camera has cultivated some of the established neo-Surrealist traditions, and yet both a personal note and a fresh current of avant-garde endeavor have been achieved by his new films. His eye is trained upon those mute but crucial passages of drama that pervade the relations between and among people; visible things, yet things that the naked eye of everyday life misses or passes over or at least subjectivizes too rapidly. These things exist beyond doubt, his camera proves, and they form patterns that make true cinema--non-verbal cinema, and the truer for that reason. It is a transposed kind of modern "music": an atonality and dissonance of the inner senses, the inner ear and eye, added to the outer or existing in magical independence of them. Sometimes, actual sound in these films is an instrumental music, in which case one perceives a fleeting link between significant vision and significant sound. Thus Brakhage has a basic sense of form as well as the faculty of conveying to his actors the quality of what they are doing. With the right support--the just support that every poor young worker in the arts requires--there is no telling, now, just how far this earnest young filmist may go. There is pleasure and dignity in helping art to flourish. Brakhage and other worthy experimentalists are buds on the main stalk of the art of our times.

PARKER TYLER

UNGLASSED WINDOWS CAST A TERRIBLE REFLECTION:
a melodrama of violence in an abandoned mine.

THE WAY TO SHADOW GARDEN:
an exploration of terror and the fantastic.

The very young of this time and country,
they who will forever live with the unreal
fear of a war of imaginary explosions,
are creatures of desistance. They yearn, if
at all, for their rightful heritage as
bastards of the great whore which bore
them. As it is, they are locked by images
of a love given too distantly to be useful
any longer. Some turn inward to explore
for this love. This requires too great a
memory for most. They soon come to play
with the mechanism of sex, their only toy,
too complicated to be taken seriously. Some
fold arms and wait. Even these freaks
have a destiny. My films are the product
of the searcher, are intrinsically
concerned with the players and are created
for those who are waiting.

---STAN BRAKHAGE

THE EXTRAORDINARY CHILD:
a slow slapstick comedy with an unusual theme.

REFLECTIONS ON BLACK:
an adventure in sexual drama.

The question is not how to get there
but why bother coming back

Boy in a hurry after the empty street
The footfall that is after all only your own
What did you expect? Not this really
Not this familiar room thrown into a fury
And the warm smell of the beast that had fled

The town should have known and held you longer
You who found yourself too near to midnight
A bed empty and unexplainably warm

Whatever happens now happens. For hands
That held riddles bring you the glass
You dropped as a child. Boy in your anger

The beast waits patiently in her place
Lying more wrinkled than your bed
With dark flowers curling on her arms

Go back for her. She is harmless
You shall find no wife without sunlight
No perfumes with a hatred for the blind
Only remember Boy as you kiss her
She was killed a long time ago by a great man

BEN MOORE: about SHADOW GARDEN

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